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Saint Paul Pilots All-Natural Water Treatment System for Public Pools

Sphagnum moss significantly reduces chemical usage, benefits swimmers, staff and pool maintenance

SAINT PAUL – Mayor Chris Coleman, Creative Water Solutions president and CEO David Knighton, MD, and Parks and Recreation director Mike Hahm unveiled preliminary results of the nation’s first public pool moss-based water treatment system installation Monday at the Highland Park Aquatic Center.

The pilot project was undertaken with the innovative Minnesota-based company, which already has demonstrated the moss-based system’s effectiveness in residential pools and spas.

“Saint Paul continues to be a national leader when it comes to embracing innovative green practices like this moss-based filtration system for public pools,” Mayor Coleman said. “Proving the capability of this product in the real world, we’re bringing immeasurable environmental benefits to our residents and pool users, generating cost savings for taxpayers, and helping a Minnesota company grow.”

In early June, the City installed a new sphagnum moss-based water treatment system at the Highland Park Aquatic Center, and due to its success, recently installed the system at the Great River Water Park. The pilot project involved installing a series of canisters housing the water conditioning sphagnum moss that work along with state-mandated chemical systems to ensure pools are safe for large general public usage. The system uses natural moss to control the growth of microorganisms such as bacteria, algae and other waterborne agents and by reducing metals and other deleterious elements.

The benefits of the new commercial system are dramatic and include:

- **Higher customer satisfaction, with the majority of those surveyed at Highland this summer reporting very clear water with no taste, clear vision in the water, and smooth feeling skin before and after swimming.**
- **Significant reduction in chemical usage, such as chlorine and cyanuric acid.**
- **Less time for maintenance due to reduction in backwashing and algae growth.**
- **Less chemical corrosion of pipes, heaters, pumps and liners and less costly repairs.**

“We believe the overall results from the test of the Highland Pools and the other sites we just started testing in Saint Paul will one day be viewed as a historical benchmark in the

natural, or green, water treatment of recreational water environments of all kind,” said Dr. Knighton, co-founder of Creative Water Solutions. “This was an ideal pool setting to conduct our experiment. The four pools at the Aquatic Center became a laboratory for the summer. We were successful in significantly lowering the pool’s chemical loads, especially chlorine, and creating more natural water conditions and less harmful impacts to swimmers’ bodies and suits, and pool hardware, while still maintaining a safe — but healthier — and more enjoyable swimming experience that met all of the city’s and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards.”

“Installing this system in our public pool facilities was an opportunity to test a product that has been widely successful at the private level,” Hahm said. “Responding creatively to change and developing a partnership with Creative Water Solutions was a terrific risk-reward situation, and we are excited to see results are far exceeding our expectations.”

“All summer, people of all ages who have swum here for many years have asked us, ‘What have you done to the water? It feels so good.’” said Lynn Waldorf, supervisor of aquatics. “We all learned a lot about how the science of natural water conditioning really works and witnessed first hand its impact on our pool users, staff and equipment. We are thankful for being involved and look forward to the day when the use of moss in public pools is the standard rather than the exception.”

“It’s a completely different pool,” said 19-year-old Mary Schmidt, a regular weekly visitor to the pool as a summer nanny. “My eyes and the kid’s eyes didn’t get red, the water didn’t smell of chlorine and it was a lot softer feeling in general. I love it.”

For more information on the sphagnum moss water filtration system, visit Creative Water Solutions website at www.cwsnaturally.com.